



HISTORY OF ORGANIZATION

Storefront for Art and Architecture, was founded in 1982 by architect/artist Kyong Park. The original facility was a small storefront on Prince Street in New York City. Programs then included art and architectural exhibitions, performances and special projects including "Adams House in Paradise" (1984), an international competition to design proposals for a low-income HUD housing project that could preserve an extraordinary homestead garden in the Lower East Side of Manhattan called "Graden of Eden" by Adam Purple; "Before Whitney" (1985), a competition in response to the controversy stemming from Michael Grave's proposed addition to the Whitney Museum; "After Tilted Arc" (1985), an exhibition of design proposals on what to do with Richard Serra's now removed sculpture at Foley Square in New York City.

In 1986 Storefront moved to its present location on Kenmare Street in the Soho/Little Italy area. This unique triangular space has allowed ambitious and international exhibitions along with site-specific, interior and exterior installations. The exhibition program included artists and architects who had little or no previous history of exhibition in New York, as well as those who were widely known but were challenged by Storefront's program and space. Artistic intervention within the triangular space of Storefront by architects, along with the use of the entire building by visual artists as a site, has been the base of a number of site-specific installations.

Norwegian artist Benta Stokke collected dark ashes from the smoke stacks of factories and sprayed the walls of the exhibition space to create an installation called "Ship" (1988). Artist Steve Barry built a kinetic sculpture that combined cinema, audio and mechanical apparatus in his site-specific installation called "Poseidon" (1987). Artist Mel Chin, in his installation "State of Heaven: Degrees of Paradise" (1991), suspended from the ceiling a 30 foot triangular carpet woven by Kurds in the pattern of earth's atmosphere. Opposite from this carpet hung 14 video monitors, also suspended from the ceiling, playing images of our atmosphere computer generated on a multi-dimensional fractal model. Together they portrayed the state of ozone depletion in our atmosphere.

In 1992 a collaborative team of architects, James Cathcart, Frank Fantauzzi and Terrence Van Elslander, inserted five portable bathrooms into the facade for public use. This project, a reflection on the diminishment of social civility and public space in contemporary cities, was an attempt to make art more accessible and meaningful to the public in both symbolic and functional terms.

In the Fall of 1993, Storefront's existing space will be dramatically transformed and expanded by artist Vito Acconci and architect Steven Holl. This project will mark the beginning of a series of two year installations by artists and architects.

Expansion of space and administrative growth has laid the groundwork for other new programs such as forums, publications and competitions. Among some of the most successful competitions are "Homeless at Home" (1987), a call for housing for the homeless; "Project DMZ" (1989), an international project requesting proposals for designs & ideas for the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea; "Project Atlas" (1990) an international competition seeking proposals for the reuse of existing abandoned missile silos in upstate New York (1987); and "The New American Ghettos" (1991), which investigated the rapid development of ghettos in the New York area and the issue of future housing for the poor.

Storefront has a history of organizing Conferences, in particular **ECO-TEC International Forum**, which usually occurs nomadically and in collaboration with other institutions in the United States and abroad. For example in Spring of 1993, in Manhattan, Storefront collaborated with the *Dia Center For the Arts* and organized a major two day conference titled "Ecology of the Artificial". In France, on the island of Corsica, during the summers of 1992 and 1993, Storefront has organized a conference/workshop with the *Universite' de Corse*. Currently, the Fourth ECO-TEC International Forum is being organized for the City of Los Angeles, to be held in Spring of 1994 in collaboration with the *Los Angeles Forum for Architecture and Urban Design* and the *Southern California School of Architecture (SCI-ARC)*. Storefront also has a long history of organizing informal series of discussions on public art and architecture. Most recently, in Spring of 1993, a series of four evening discussions titled "**Architecture Beyond Buildings**". was organized with the *Municipal Art Society*, held at *The Urban Center* in New York.

Publication have always been an important component of Storefront's programs. In 1989, Storefront formalized its publications and established two series. **FRONTS** mainly document the exhibition program. Recently *Princeton Architectural Press* has agreed to co-publish several future issues of **FRONTS** beginning with "History of Storefront". **REPORTS**, Storefront's quarterly publication, was established in 1991 with the intention of regularly documenting works by artists, architects and writers which are not otherwise published in this country. **REPORTS** has over 200 subscribers and is sold at bookstores in the US and abroad.

STOREFRONT

1. A place for the study, discussion and exhibition of of contemporay architecture and its concerns.
2. A place for the study, discussion, publication, and exhibition contemporary cutlutral issues and the role of the artist in culture.
- 3.

Public art:

- Very interesting*
1. the realm embracing art rights that belong to the community at large, are unprotected b copyright or patent, and are subject to appropriation b anyone.
 2. the science dealing with the protection and iiprovement of community ~~xxxxxx~~ esthetics by organized community effort, ~~xxx~~
 3. licensed art
 4. art owned by the government
 5. a peice of art affecting the public at large.
a branch of aestetics concerned with regulating the relation of artists with the governmant.
 6. the business of inducing the public to have understanding for and goodwill ~~for~~ art
 7. a free tax-supported ~~xxx~~ work of art for aesthetic activity controlled by a local governm ntal authority
 8. the business of supplying art or aesthetic understanding to any or all members ofa community. An art work rendered in the public interest.
 9. the act of process of making art in pbulic. the art of effective communication with an audeince.
 10. art that provides culutral, informational and instructional ~~xxxxxxx~~ art for the public and that does not promote the sale of that art except for identifying the donors of supporting funds.
 11. a business orgainization performing a public service and subject to special governmental regulation.
 12. Works of art constructed ofr public use or enjoyment esp. when fincanced and owned b the government.

Public Artist

1. a artist usu. holding public office whose duty is to create art for deprived person unable to pay for art.
2. a ~~person~~ an artist who holds a post to which he has been legally elected or appointed and who exercies governmental funcitons in the arts.
3. an artist motivated by devotion to the general welfare.
4. an artist in the employ of the government

STOERFRONT

Private: Withdrawn from company or observation
not known or intended to be known publicly
unsuitable for public use or display.

Public Exposed to general view
well-known, prominent
Perceptible, material

Private: Intended for or restricted to the use of a particular
person, group, or class.
Belonging to or concerning an individual person, company,
or interest (house)

Public Relating to or affecting all the people of a whole area
of a nation or state.
Being in service of the community or nation
Relating to mankind in general - universal
Devoted to the general or national welfare.
accessible or shared by all members of the community

Public art - Seems to be defined by practice in the US as exposed
to general view and accessible. But the ideas and images
seem private - unsuitable for public use and intended to
be understood only by particular class. The first series
of definitions in Webster's do not appear in the art
which has been put in the public since WWII in Western
culture. - Relating to all people, being in service of
the people, devoted to the general welfare, and sharing of
ideas with all members of the community.

Can work be created for this particular class of people that expresses
a desire for the general state of human and human society. For me,
homelessness expresses many significant public issues that should
be discussed in the public. The first being how shall we, members of
the healthy society, care for the outcast of that culture. -
those who can't work, and therefore pay for a home, those so unhealthy
with drug, alcohol, mental, physical (aged) and those who chose not
to participate in the general culture. The second being, what has
happened to the definition of home and community with the destruction
of the nuclear family, the escalating number of one person
households, the lack of permanent place - to a community.
Have we become the true "masses" with every person for him/herself
with very limited and temporal connections to old notions of
permanent small scale groups like family and neighborhood and
city. Third being

Exhibition 2 parts

- A. Images, models, writings, proposals by artist, architects and others.
- B. Photo, written, video documentation of existing facilities
in the US good and bad.

ORGANIZATION OBJECTIVES

Storefront for Art and Architecture is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to an expanded definition of public art and architecture to include the intersection of esthetic, social, political, and large cultural issues. Storefront supports the idea that art and design have the potential and responsibility to effect public policies which influence the quality of life and the future of all cities. In opposition to the common tendency to separate art and life, esthetics and politics, Storefront seeks a unification of creative ideas and public issues.

Storefront operates as a resource center ^{and gallery} to gather and disseminate information and as an activist organization committed to the enhancement of the built environment for all citizens. Through an ongoing series of public projects and events including exhibitions, installations, seminars and lectures, and publications, Storefront is a clearinghouse ^(?) for the exchange of ideas that concern public life. *Examples of program?*

Comprised of artists, designers, architects, and citizens, Storefront proposes a concept of urban life that is pluralistic. The organization is ideologically-based, and welcomes and thrives on the discourse of passionate, but often conflicting, opinions. The organization maintains a clear vision and specific agenda without being monolithic. It is an active, evolutionary forum -- responsive to contemporary ideas and committed to fulfilling the promise of public life.

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For the purpose of reuniting our previously independent minds, and to discuss about a place which we all are part of, I have selfishly written the following self-thoughts upon this difficult intersection ~~for~~ decisions which the STOREFRONT has come to.

After 4 years dedication and vision, why has the natural evolution of this place has come so suddenly to an unanswered halt, and is in danger of a total collapse? Through reasoned observation that is more practical than pure emotional retaliation, the various points of its stress-fracture must be identified and their origin must be traced. First, the evolutionary growth of this organization is now causing problems that are much larger in force to overcome than in our earlier days. After 3 1/2 years of operation within the miniscule confines at the Prince Street, STOREFRONT moved to larger and ~~obscure~~ *Stabbing* space at Kenmare. This newly acquired physical place offers a measurable growth of the organization, for the purpose of the public acceptance of STOREFRONT as a truly legitimate place, and comparable to the over-sized cultural orientation of New York and the new world. But this may have been an emotional push in our part, and not a thoughtful move for our growth, as it now poses a very serious obstacle to overcome now oversized financial burden, and un-matched man-power to sustain. This may be a simple mistake in the manner of business, as STOREFRONT does not have consistent cash-flow to meet its overhead.

Leaving the materialistic issue of STOREFRONT aside, the spiritual content of the place has also been fracture. With numerous items of conflict, some known, some unknown, some misunderstood, the personal and the professional marriage of the two directors has separated with many alimony of accomplishments and duties in suspect. Some of the visible issues in conflict are; direct and personal control of the STOREFRONT v.s. democratic operation of STOREFRONT, ideology vs. actions, directorship vs. administration, dictation vs. compromise, and finally park vs. weiss. The early days of STOREFRONT operated on the basis of *Personal* direct control over its vision and programs. As an underground and grass root organization, this operational structure proved effective as the it helped the STOREFRONT to develop a unique identity and vision, thus separating itself from the mainstream of cultural services to the makers and the consumers of art. Now the ~~result~~ result of our physical growth and the establishment of our own status, the question being posed at this very moment is the validity of personal and direct control, and the emergence of a democratic participation by new members toward the future of the STOREFRONT. Does this means a corresponding personal change to meet the reality of the organization growth? Which system will better serve the purpose and activities of STOREFRONT in the future, and resurrect it from its collapse now?

The next issue in question is the struggling paradox of ideology vs. action. When the organization was small, the strength of ideology can defend the its ineptness to accomplish a measureable consequence in reality. The value of the ideology as the seed for actions to come is recognized as the servitude

of an underground and spirited small entity. Although it never is a severed relation in black of white, the demand for concrete *action* becomes greater as we consume more financial contributions, The symbiosis of this paradox is that the ideology controls the validity and the values of actions, and actions proves the reality or fantasy of ~~the~~ untested ideology. Ideology also constructs actions, and actions also gives the refinements to old ideology and reveals the need of new ideology. Here is a case where the two directors can each take one of the above paradox as their best suited responsibility, reflective of their individual personal psychic. However, such correspondence was never made, and often in conflict for the possession of both, and in the fear of jealousy about the superiority of one end of the paradox over the other end.

the directorship vs. management is another intriguing paradox for any organization. The overt conflict of this relationship stems from the favorable *position* of the directorship over the management as the former may make the major decision where the latter can be burdened by the unrewarding shuffling of informations. Question which must be answered at here are; who has been directing and administrating, who will direct and administer, who is better suited to direct or administer?

For the question of dictation and compromises, perhaps an *obscure* juxtaposition to you, is yet a very important and biased view point of me. With the invitational exhibition of accomplished architects and artists this does not pose much problems as the exhibit's personal vision and are kept independent, and STOREFRONT's curatorial judgements are made by our respect to the quality & *stringer* of the work and their similarity with our own vision. *Problem appears* ~~However~~ with our projects where artists and architects are invited and stimulated with our public/collective purpose, and asked to contribute their constructive statements. In the case of the Homeless at Home project, I feel an immense disappointment with the quality, contents, and ideas within the works participated, and the project itself has strayed the STOREFRONT from making a historical advocacy of ideas, which perhaps is ~~too~~ explicit for the *supporters* of this controlled culture to accept, and also has compromised ourselves to the mainstream of the society for the sole purpose of STOREFRONT's acceptance, popularity and survival. The beauracraci destiny of STOREFRONT is now becoming too predictable, and beginning to shadow the ~~unpredictable~~ *visions toward forever unknown future unpredictable future* ~~mystery of~~

Finally the most difficult juxtapositions of them all, human vs. human, park vs. weiss. It is my feeling, perhaps presumptuous and negligent, that I have offered Glenn everything that I have constructed, introduced, and learned together. Yet it still has not satisfied his demand and his belief, so therefore, I now release everything but those which I believe is of my dignity and rights. If I am misunderstanding and unaware of somethings, I request Glenn to reveal those misgiving by me to him in front of this gathering now, for our personal disputes is inseparable form the state of STOREFRONT today. My bitterness at this moment rises form my parting with STOREFRONT in undesirable *way*, and the cancellation of human friendship with one whom I ~~have so closely~~ was interdependent, *to*,

Now we must resolve factual issues and make decision about the future of STOREFRONT

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Dear Shirin and Kyong,

Sunday, August 18, 1991

Here is the article we talked about. After several rewrites, and after I accidentally erased several hours work, I am finally satisfied with it. I hope you like it, and that it answers what you wanted.

The version I am placing on the disc is Macintosh formatted-Microsoft Word, with a Times 12 point font, single spaced, and justified to both sides. The hard copy I am sending you are printed on a Texas Instrument laser printer. It would look good with some of the many wonderful photographs made by Plauto of the original performances, if there is enough space in your book.

Good luck with your project and let me know how it comes out.

Reiko is big, with our second baby due in October. Kai Maria is being potty trained so the house is constantly filled with puddles and talk about peepee and poopoo. Our love to your son and I hope we will be seeing you next year, if I am brave enough to attempt a trans-Pacific flight with two baby terrorists aboard.

Love, RL

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I helped create an alternative art center, in the early eighties, with the architect Kyong Park called STOREFRONT FOR ART AND ARCHITECTURE, in service to, and in collaboration with, an extraordinary community of artists and musicians living in and around New York City. Renting, and then renovating, an old Italian coffee grinder's storefront, with Kyong's modest savings and the love labor of our friends, STOREFRONT entered kicking and screaming, the proud child of an illicit relationship.

All hell broke loose when we opened on Prince Street, in 'Little Italy' during the Saint's Day festival, with our twenty-six nights of continuous art performance. A poignant and poetic foreshadowing to a courageous continuum, a roller coaster ride of inspiration and depression, within that great amusement park called the New York art world. In the years that follow, Kyong and his co-curators continually presented provocative art and architectural attacks on the bastille of convention. Feverishly challenging the aesthetic and intellectual assumptions of a dying century, STOREFRONT is still very much alive. I give you my memories of her birth.

We all take away our own art history from the early eighties. Mine is woven in an old haircloth of political and economic struggle, a pro-wrestling match between the power elite of SoHo, against the new young thinkers of those times. A guerilla war, between art-death and art-life, a movement and a time when I and others felt our oats.

One might say we created a Deconstructivist factory with STOREFRONT, where the creative pluralism of the streets grew spontaneously from the spores of artists not yet recognized by any establishment. Though we did not feel ourselves a part of any movement (but more as a motion creating itself as it moved, like a biker wheeling off a cliff) we lavished ourselves in dialectics and detail. Aesthetic choice was how we walked, every detail was labored over and then laughingly applied, in those art life times. What was made lived and died before our eyes.

We chose the first location of STOREFRONT, on the northern edge of 'Little Italy', as a geographical and symbolic DMZ, between the absurdly affluent SoHo and the Lower East Side where many of my compatriots lived. We saw these neighborhoods as sleazy art zones where both the indigenous community and new immigrant artists struggled for the limited resources of a wounded American economy. The name, STOREFRONT FOR ART AND ARCHITECTURE, reflected Kyong Park's and my belief that we should foremost address the needs of the artist, not as the slave class of the wealthy, but as the visionaries of a ruler-less society.

STOREFRONT emulated the ambience of the endemic 'mom and pop' stores that serviced our neighborhoods. In simplicity we hoped to facilitate function. Our function was to create a political front, a window perpetually radiating power from an underestimated art esprit de corps, a barrio art bodega. Just as each Italian social club consolidated and maintained the force of the local Italian community, we too sought freedom and means of expression for our minority, the creative underworld. STOREFRONT would represent what the art world dinosaurs, who trampled the healing herbs of our urban jungles, were not sensitive enough to perceive.

Our very lack of sound business sense, our fool-hearted fiscal vulnerability, guaranteed our credibility within the community. We fasted on the water of creation. Previous experience with Arleen Schloss and Tod Jergenson, orchestrating art events at A's, in which 'consolidating capital' meant 'counting the change in our pockets', convinced us STOREFRONT was realizable. Overhead was kept to a minimum, easy, considering the state of our collective finances, made up of unemployment checks and off-the-books construction work.

Artists continually verified their support with active participation, our creature comforts came from the streets. We slept around, and ate when we could, but the shows

always looked a million. A life style, I realize now, which made the early eighties a provocatively productive period in our lives.

The concept behind the opening show, 26 nights of live performance "From A to Z", illustrated our steadfast faith in artists to do what is right, and do it in ways never imagined by us 'coordinators'. An egg and bottle attack from a local contingency, the ex-con crowd from a local social club, who mistook a candle lit collage of syringes by the Russian couple Gerlovin for cult worship, help confirm my faith. I recall how we felt certain we would be shut down for good, after this third raid from the 'seen it all, but this takes the cake' New York police force. When, like tutored angels in the ways of the world, a provocatively beautiful Italian art performer, and her bleach blonde partner, seductively sauntered over to the local mob's headquarters and eyelash flashingly pleaded our case. The police left, leaving more quickly than they came, with hostile neighbors becoming our protectors. All thanks to the artistic negotiation of these in-house masters of body language and chutzpah.

Uncompromising erotic and political action performances were exposed, decomposed, and then released on all of us, each night from the STOREFRONT window. Twenty six nights of wild and wooly performances, many with dozens of collaborators, never of one medium, in love as we were with all that was good aesthetically, a sensual soup of sensations.

Radical innovation, the nectar of each night, forced the next artist of our alphabet to the edge, a super bowl of creative madness. The dialogues initiated lingered on, in the night air, filling our lungs with villainous ideas, and our blood with the adrenalin to make these ideals real. Our love lives merged in an orgy of interplanetary collaborations. Aliens of all sorts were fucking with each other and creating new strings of DNA. Painter, performer, architect, poet, and musician danced around the boiling caldron brewing on the curb, during those long lustful summer nights.

Day's were spent setting up an ever changing exhibition of individual histories, nights we'd witness this history manifesting. It is only now, after the reactionary 90's have reared their wicked tight-ass heads, have I grown to truly appreciate the sacred seldom-blooming flower we had in our hands then. It is a middle age man's masochistic pleasure to recall the string of brilliances he watched through every orifice and nerve ending, as I did in the early days of STOREFRONT.

What came out of the initial twenty-six nights are a sorted collection of art relics, faded memories, and a few coveted snap-shots of crimes against mediocrity. Many of the artists linger on the edge still, waiting for a verdict on their own place in history. A few, featured back then, remain afloat, in these polluted seas of reaction and evasion. Some have died of AIDS, alienation, and fatigue, tired of swimming against the unrelenting tide of our troubled times.

But I do not want to suggest the flower is dead. Her seed sleeps, in the sun lit window of a mom and pop storefront, waiting for the moistening kiss of a new generation of anarchists. Living in Japan, as I do now, I am reminded daily that the seeds are not in the cute consumables we feed the wilting third world, nor in our fading old world faiths of Capital, God, and State. Instead, I suggest you do your shopping at the STOREFRONT, for there immortality, the scent of essence essential for survival, still exists for free. The soil is impregnated with a lineage of wisdom, unknown to the wicked warlords of commerce who darken our skies and seas, with the dirt of their deceptions. Kiss this seed, and set her flower free.